

# Annual Report 2021



Shakti Community  
Council Inc.





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## *OUR VISION*

**To have a world where women and children are empowered to live a life of dignity, free from fear and violence, and are able to exercise their rights, choices and responsibilities**

## *OUR MISSION*

**We endeavour to facilitate and ensure safety and overall well-being of all women, young women and children through strategic intervention measures aimed at eliminating all forms of oppression and gender-based violence.**



# Executive Summary



Season's Greetings and welcome to Shakti AGM 2021.

As an organisation, Shakti has, despite facing much adversity and challenging circumstances emerged well by achieving many milestones in 2021. I am sure by early 2022, we will be able to consolidate more changes.

We have established an excellent operational system with good leadership and excellent service delivery with able leadership from Hema Palapallil and Margie Agaied-Dinwoodie. Congratulations to both of you!

The two pillars at the centre of what Shakti advocates for are: Good administration and good service delivery models. This structure makes the staff, who work tirelessly, feel appreciated and valued. It also ensures that the clients receiving the services feel respected and supported through their painful journeys.

We continue to work hard on fulfilling these values. On behalf of the Council, I can assure you that in 2022 we will be implementing necessary changes to the organisational working model with the help of some great leaders and well-wishers of Shakti.

I would also like to present some milestones that Shakti has achieved in an exceptionally challenging year. First, the long-awaited Ethnic Best Practice Guidelines have been published and are awaiting formal release. These Guidelines will offer those involved in delivering family violence services information and awareness of the dynamics of ethnic communities in New Zealand and how to appropriately service victims. The process of writing these Guidelines included extensive consultations with NGO's, communities, government departments, academia, Human Rights Commission, and, most importantly, Shakti's survivor groups.

Shakti also developed a new model for keeping women in the community safe through a community crisis response framework. This framework will provide women who are victims with the knowledge and tools they need to help themselves in times of crisis. The support also extends to former refuge-based survivors for up to 18 months in terms of community re-settlement. Shakti has also developed a handbook for survivors of family violence to navigate the legal system, specifically the court system.

We have served vulnerable women for over 26 years, and I assure you that our committed, beautiful women will be here forever serving with a smile. I want to thank each and every staff and volunteer who has stuck together during these difficult times and stood by the purpose, forgetting the individual experiences.

I will also like to thank former staff and associates who have reminded us of the selfless services Shakti, as a team, provides to vulnerable women. They have made us even stronger in our conviction to serve by putting good systems in place and focusing on the vision and the mission of Shakti.

Shakti has attracted some great people and organisations this year who value and respect the service Shakti has provided over the years and are willing to lend a hand in every way they can.

I look forward to a positive 2022. I wish everyone who has been with us over the last 12 months a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

On behalf of the Shakti Council, I would like to say a huge thank you!

Yours Sincerely

Dr Shanthi Selvakumar  
Chairperson

# Our National Report

2021 marks 26 years of Shakti's services to women and families within New Zealand's migrant and refugee communities. This year, Shakti members have focused on maintaining and building connections, staff wellbeing, and increasing the levels of client care throughout the extended COVID-19 lockdowns. Shakti faced challenges throughout the year, and these challenges have led to all members working together to overcome them and become stronger as a team.

In the past year, two Shakti staff have achieved their ten-year service with the organisation; Ambika Kohli and Lisda Anggraeni have been a crucial part of our organisation for the past 10 years. Shakti would like to take this opportunity to thank them again for their dedication and love for Shakti and the cause it supports. It is a great honour to have members of Shakti working with the organisation for such a long period.



In June of 2021, Shakti National Office hired Hema Palapallil as National Operations Manager for Shakti. Hema brings years of experience in Finance, HR and Operations, and has a robust corporate background that has been an essential and welcomed addition to Shakti's day-to-day running. Hema joined the organisation with a wealth of knowledge and support for the National Office team and the Regional Administrative Coordinators nationwide.

Shakti's "Ethnic Best Practice Guidelines" has been published this year, and we are preparing for its formal release to the ethnic communities and service providers in New Zealand. Shakti created these

guidelines in consultation with survivor-client groups, other NGOs, ethnic communities, government departments, social workers, counsellors, academics, and the Human Rights Commission. The Guideline ensures that the practices consider all the relevant dynamics involved in providing appropriate family violence response services to ethnic groups.

A COVID-19 lockdown in Auckland from August until December created additional challenges for the Shakti team. However, we were able to use the COVID-19 manual designed in early 2020 to maintain our services and adapt to the situation well. During this lockdown, Shakti members focused on client care and wellbeing and ensured that Shakti provided clients with all the necessary services. The New Zealand Government and ministries, including MSD, were also conducive to assisting Shakti in providing emergency accommodation for new clients seeking refuge. Shakti is very grateful for this.

Implementing the CRM (Community Response Management) Framework has yielded positive results, with women based in the community having resources and knowledge to keep themselves safe. Shakti will be spending the coming year further implementing this work alongside distributing a resource manual that will help victims navigate the courts and justice system.

The Finance Manager and Operations Manager have also taken the opportunity to improve the organisational systems and payroll structure. The new system ensures that all parts of Shakti are efficient, effective, and reliable.

The orchestrated anonymous campaign against Shakti earlier in 2021 has drawn the entire organisation closer, and Shakti believes that members will use this positively. Shakti has taken this opportunity to ensure that all procedures and policies are up to date and that no part of the organisation is able to be compromised.

2021 has provided Shakti with the chance to develop the progress already made in 2020 and establish further support regarding the wellbeing and health of clients, governance members, staff, interns, and volunteers across New Zealand. Adapting to change throughout the year has assisted everyone in the process of becoming more in-tune and in strengthening the organisation, which in turn has helped us support our clients better. Shakti would like to thank all who have provided ongoing support throughout this year and over the past 26 years of Shakti.

# National Service Delivery

For the different Shakti service delivery teams across New Zealand, we understand that Shakti is fiercely a social change organisation and addressing gender-based violence at crisis point is what we do. With this understanding, all our teams are committed to ensuring that Shakti provides 24/7 crisisline support, refuge services, advocacy work in the legal, social welfare, and immigration areas, information, and referral services. But it is a reality that a lot more work needs to be done beyond establishing and supporting safety to ensure a post-crisis response, independence, and wellbeing of clients and their children.

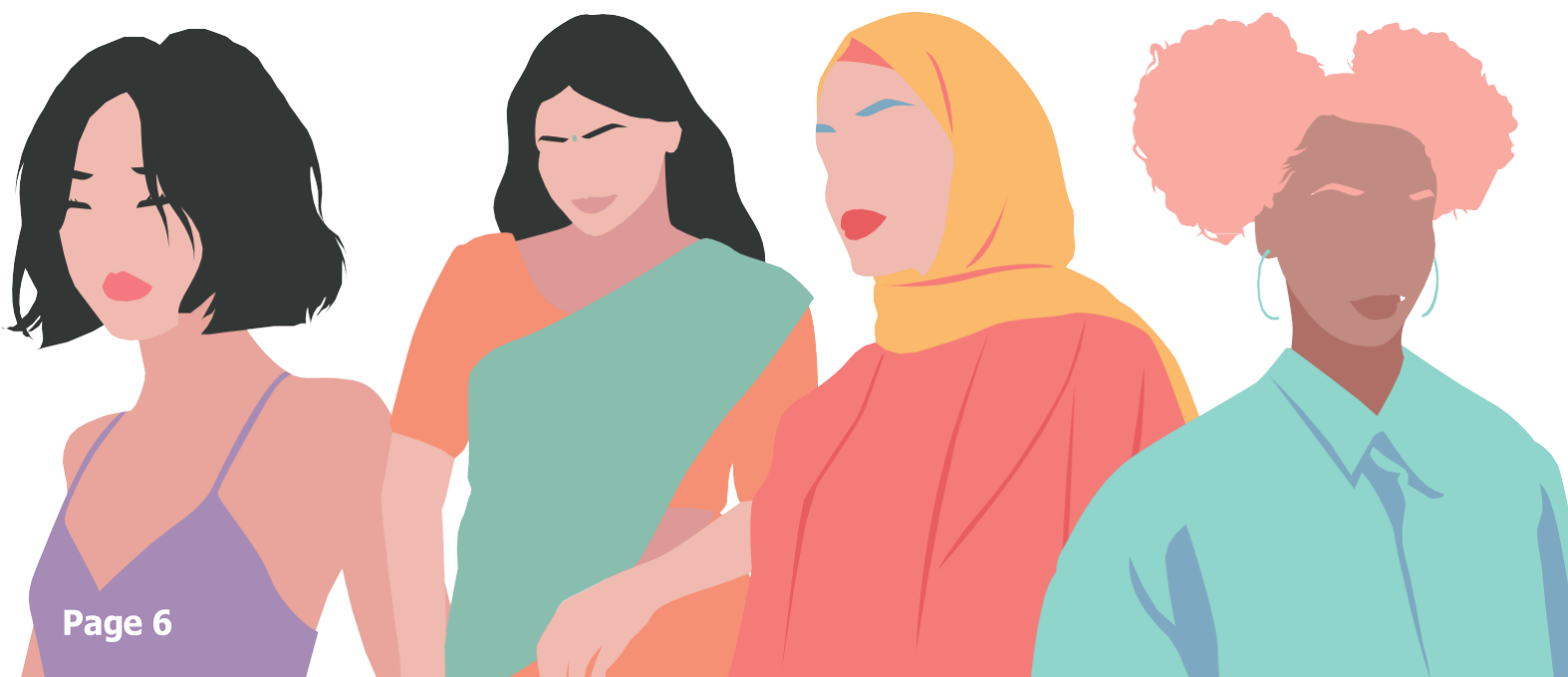
Crisis intervention in domestic violence is already a daunting and challenging undertaking during normal times. These challenges are doubly complicated and are more accentuated during this global pandemic. The glaring example of this was how COVID-19 related matters exacerbated mental stresses and psychological impacts of DV/FV/SV. Many clients cannot fully focus on their health and wellbeing in NZ because they are also concerned about the health and safety of their family members overseas. There are also issues about employment worries, loss of income/business failures, and grief/death in the immediate/extended families. These factors collectively contribute to heightened anxiety and significant decline in the emotional health and wellbeing of many migrants, which is evident in the continuing trend of ethnic women and youths seeking counselling services and mental health support.

Shakti has been actively engaging in the wider community and national level platforms, especially around the development of the National Family Violence Prevention Strategy being led by the Joint Venture Business Unit - Eliminating Family Violence and Sexual Violence (JVBU). Local and national engagements were welcomed and participated in by experienced staff members from the service delivery arm of Shakti. Shakti has made its voices heard and advocacies known, individually and collectively, that culturally appropriate domestic violence services must be considered. Service providers and government

departments must approach this through a gender-based lense and analysis. They must understand that the safety and security of victims are paramount and perpetrator accountability important.

COVID-19 and associated lockdowns and protocols continue to dominate many of our staff and team meetings. As government policies change, we respond and update our organisational guidelines. To date, all Shakti staff members are fully vaccinated (double dosed), and some will go for booster shots soon. We inform and educate clients about vaccinations, especially those who are not sure or have limited understanding/information about it. While information and raising awareness is an ongoing task, Shakti also continues to offer practical support during lockdowns, like providing food packs, hygiene supplies, and baby food and needs such as nappies and baby wipes.

As an essential service, Shakti continues to accommodate and provide services to ethnic women, young people, and children seeking safety from violence and abuse. Most of our teams have developed partnerships with the police and other service providers and agencies to address safety needs and manage risks faced by victims in the community and in abusive home environments. We also note the importance of counselling services and complimentary mental health support to clients, especially those with self-harming histories and risks or having difficulties managing day to day routines that may involve childcare or their own health issues.





# SHAKTI ASIAN WOMEN'S CENTRE INC.



With the goal of continuous improvement and development, Shakti Auckland introduced a few changes and updates to the operations and management of service delivery in the Auckland region. Two of the main changes were in the Crisisline system and opening a service centre (drop-in centre) in South Auckland.



The opening of a service centre in the central Manukau area was a response to the growing number of referrals and help-seeking communications from the Manukau district and areas further south like Papakura, Takanini, Pukekohe, and other suburbs. This was also in response to a community need related to transport issues, i.e. not able to drive, no access to a vehicle, no funds to get around. The Manukau centre provides a venue for meetings, counselling, life skills programmes, and work desks for staff.

The Auckland service delivery team has strengthened partnerships with different police districts for service coordination and mutual learning. Working with police officers helps facilitate trust in the police force so victims, especially women, may find the confidence to call police in emergencies.



## *Onehunga Centre*

Moving some of the services from Onehunga to Manukau has provided an opportunity to create a complementary space for wrap-around support for clients from central Auckland. Rooms were upgraded to be made fit for purpose. Upgrades included repainting, furniture upgrade, and rearranging usage of space. The atmosphere was made to be more inviting, warm, and comfortable with the use of artworks created by former service users and the availability of children's items and toys. There is now a designated counselling room, small meeting room, and therapy or activity spaces. The centre will focus on wellbeing and complimentary services, including life skills workshops and events.



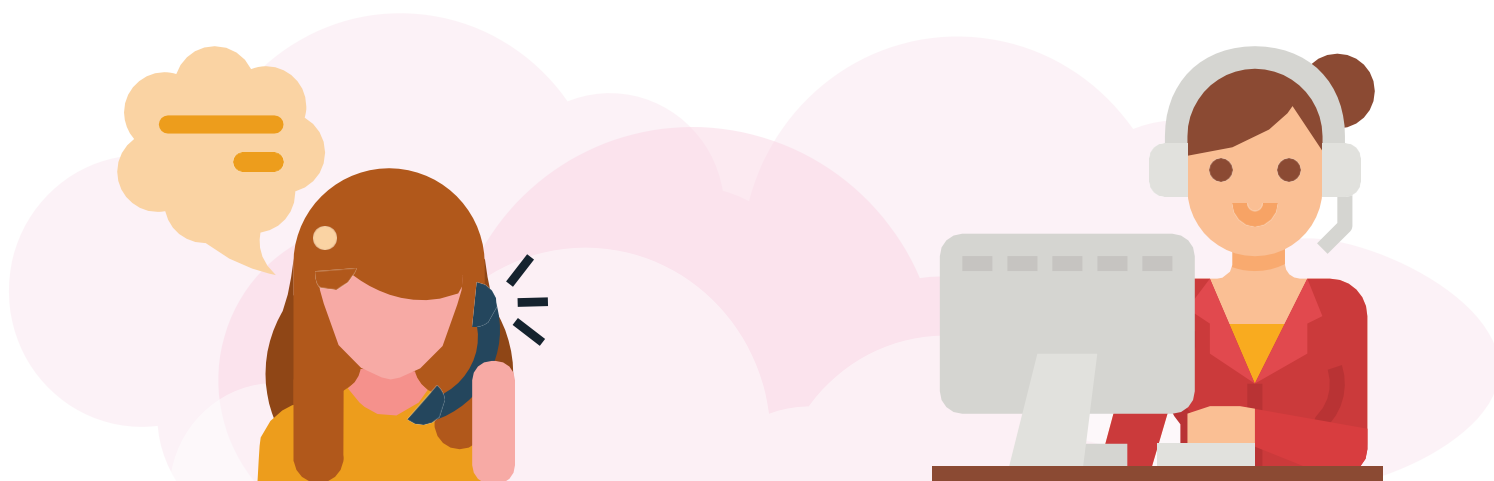


## *Crisisline upgrade*

As a gateway to engagement and a lifeline to many ethnic victims, it is paramount that the Crisisline continue to operate in any circumstances and to be able to overcome or resolve operational issues as they arise. Crisisline advocates respond, screen, assess and coordinate follow up action. During COVID19 level 4 and 3 lockdowns, Shakti required staff to work from the Crisisline centre itself and not at home due to the limitations presented by the system when the line gets diverted remotely. In 2020, Shakti moved from a phone system to an online/cloud-based system. This new system allowed staff to work from home and still be able to fully provide the services of responding to incoming calls, screening and completing assessments, and facilitating crisis pick up when required. Crisisline's internet-based phone system has been particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic and the various lockdowns that have occurred in the past year.

The phone system now provides a tracker of all missed calls while the line is engaged or busy with a current call. This tracker ensures that staff can call back those missed calls – this can be incredibly important if the caller only had the confidence to call once and was not going to call back, or if they were potentially in a life-threatening situation. This tracker also allows staff to see how many calls are being missed and be able to monitor when calls are being missed. This enables the Coordinator to see when additional staff should be rostered on or when to seek additional staffing or resourcing support.

As part of Crisisline's ongoing growth and development efforts, it continues to seek volunteer interpreters on a casual basis. Having a diverse team of staff and volunteers from different cultural and language backgrounds has been proven essential and beneficial for callers and clients calling the Crisisline for information, crisis support, or general assistance.



# SHAKTI ASIAN WOMEN'S SAFEHOUSE INC.

Many upgrades have been made to both safe houses located in Auckland over the past year, including both physical upgrades and environmental improvements. The rooms, ceilings, hallways, and communal spaces in both safehouses have been painted to brighten the ambiance and to make them more aligned with the objectives of safehouse services. The realities and challenges of implementing case plans were factored in when planning for these changes. For example, specific indoor and outdoor corners were set up in a way that can be utilized as possible counselling or client session spaces when needed. These upgrades and improvements were a response to staff and client feedbacks, client experiences and requirements as well as observations especially around mental health concerns and children's needs. These changes were also done in consideration of cultural appropriateness and requirements.

It is worth noting that having a good working relationship with local motels has been a tremendous help in terms of providing emergency accommodation when clients cannot be accommodated immediately in any of the safehouses. These could be for reasons relating to COVID19 like having symptoms, vaccinations concerns, waiting for test results; or when both safehouses are just full to capacity.



# SHAKTI ETHNIC WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP, CHRISTCHURCH INC.

Shakti Christchurch has noted a 12% increase in the number of referrals in 2020-2021, with about 62% coming from police through the Integrated Safety Response (ISR) platform. Others were primarily self-referrals and then followed by referrals from other organisations and service providers. This trend highlights the significantly high number of ethnic women who will not voluntarily seek help until they come to a point where police involvement is needed. And even then, they might not pursue formal complaints against the perpetrators of violence. Clients need to manage different layers of complexities when making decisions about their relationships and family. Cultural, religious, and community aspects significantly influence an ethnic victim's decisions and behaviours. At this time, these complexities are topped up by COVID19 related issues.

While addressing individual client issues, it is also important to look at group and community approaches that will complement case management strategies. In early 2021, Shakti Christchurch conducted a Women's Support Workshop as an event to bring clients together, share experiences, exchange ideas, and listen to each other's stories. Based on the feedback from this workshop, the centre will look into organising the same or similar activity on a regular basis. This was a great platform of support for clients trying their best to prioritise their health and their children's wellbeing during challenging times but may not or could not attend individual counselling or therapeutic programmes.



Despite the restrictions and limitations brought by COVID19, Shakti Christchurch continue to maintain its community relationships and to take part in various networking opportunities. This provides an opportunity to talk about Shakti's services and a space to korero about the various community issues that may at times be difficult or a sensitive matter for discussion. For example, many cultural/community/religious leaders get involved in ongoing DV/FV cases and they influence outcomes through reconciliation and mediation. Shakti's engagements and advocacies, on the other hand, are always focused on paramountcy of the child and safety of victims.



# SHAKTI ETHNIC WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP CENTRAL REGION INC.


As part of the government's initiative to facilitate an integrated community-led approach to reduce family/domestic violence, Shakti Tauranga took part with other family violence specialists in the region to develop how this might look locally. The integrated community response (ICR) aims to respond well to anyone who needs help and support from anywhere. Shakti collaborates and actively engages by attending twice a week meetings (Safety Assessment Meeting) with police and other specialist organisations for better client results. The Shakti Tauranga team acknowledges the importance of this mahi and the opportunity that this platform provides to engage as a specialist group regularly. This also provides Shakti Tauranga and other organisations with a venue to continue looking at best ways to complement each other's services and programmes for the benefit of the Tauranga Moana community.

As a charity organisation, Shakti Tauranga relies on volunteer engagement and support to be able to fully respond to client needs, especially during crisis and post-crisis periods of adjustments. But the reality is that maintaining a culturally and linguistically diverse staff and volunteer teams is more challenging than usual especially in Tauranga and the wider Bay of Plenty. There is a vast number of ethnic migrants in the region who are also very involved in the significant sectors of horticulture, agriculture and even in aquaculture industries. The priorities have always been paid employment and studies. Ethnic migrants tend not to have the availabilities to provide volunteer support to charity organisations. Fortunately, new migrants have the motivation to extend their time to volunteer for experiences and exposure to the workings of New Zealand society.





# SHAKTI ETHNIC WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP DUNEDIN INC.



Like all other centres, Dunedin developed innovative ways to support clients, volunteers, and each other during this intense period of changes and challenges. As a small team, personal and professional support were provided to each other to manage and cope within this environment. Thankfully, digital communication was accessible to all the team members so staff and volunteers were able to communicate and catch up with each other on a regular basis. Through the challenges of this year, the team stuck together and were strengthened by their shared experiences.

This year Shakti Dunedin was quite busy with client work during the lockdown. The team provided clients with food vouchers and other forms of support that they require. The Dunedin youth unit also continued to deliver their presentations and bring awareness about issues that matter to ethnic youth.

To keep in touch with the community during tough times, Shakti Dunedin continued to present its community radio show at OAR FM 105.4. The team stayed in touch with its networks online and ensured clients' needs were met and that they were not disadvantaged in any way.

In the coming year, Dunedin will focus on catching up with community-based activities, increasing awareness, raising Shakti's profile, and fundraising activities. Many planned activities did not happen. They were either cancelled or postponed due to COVID19 related issues and changes. But there is a positive vibe and hope that this coming year will be different and that Shakti Dunedin can be more active again in the wider community.

# SHAKTI ETHNIC WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP WELLINGTON INC.

Shakti Wellington has doubled its capacity over the last year to provide support to ethnic women and children in the region. The team and the working space have grown with recruitments of new staff members and moving to more spacious, functional working spaces for the Newtown drop-in centre. To support the growing service delivery team, Shakti Wellington recruited an administrator to manage the day to day operations of the centre.

Shakti Wellington finally achieved decade-long advocacy to acquire MSD funding for domestic violence intervention services focusing on refuge support and crisis intervention. It followed that Shakti Wellington's working relationships extended and continued to grow. The team's networking efforts got Shakti connected with the local community centre hubs in Wellington City and the Rainbow Haven. Our teams also engaged with the various consultations and korero around the establishment of the Ministry of Ethnic Communities and the JVBU's initiative to create a government-wide strategy to eliminate family violence in the community. On a regular basis, Shakti collaborates with the DHB and other family violence networks in providing information sessions about Shakti's services and programmes. This presence continues to grow in the Porirua and Kapiti-Mana regions where staff will work on developing or maintaining working relationships.

Over this year, COVID19 protocols have restricted face to face contact with clients, staff and networks. Shakti Wellington operated with full capacity in providing usual services and additional ones during lockdown like including contactless delivery of care packages to clients, conducting assessments and meetings over the phone and Zoom, and referring them to additional community support through external agencies. The biggest challenge was talking to new referrals whilst they lived in their bubbles with the abuser.

For staff, it was not easy navigating government guidelines and protocols while providing support that requires face-to-face engagements and managing health risks to current clients and vulnerable staff members. Despite this, clients have benefited and appreciated the ongoing service and connections provided to them by Shakti in many creative ways.

Shakti Wellington aims to continue the growth and connections created this year. It has provided more resources for staff to engage in professional development, growth and learning, and continuing service provision. For the coming year, the Wellington team will look into developing new materials that can be used for information sessions, campaigns, promotions, and other awareness-raising activities. Shakti Wellington also wants to explore and dialogue with Shakti's training unit to look into the opportunity of providing culturally competent and appropriate services and training in collaboration with other agencies. This ensures that the voices and experiences of ethnic women and children are appropriately represented at all levels in the community, health sector, local councils, and the national government sectors.

Empowered  
Women  
Empower  
Women





# SHAKTI CASE STUDIES

## *Youth Case*

A youth client who comes from a conservatively religious family background sought support from Shakti after years of abuse. She has been experiencing abuse from her parents from a very young age under the guises of culture and religion. She has endured verbal, physical, emotional and psychological abuse throughout her childhood and teenage years. Her parents were extremely controlling and monitored all of her movements and social contacts. She was not allowed to enroll to study at a university either because they believe that it's better for her to be home to focus on doing chores and prepare for marriage.

**History of abuse:** As per client's stories, abuse has been normalised and accepted as part of their family life. Her parents have used household objects as weapons and was abused in the past to the extent where she was not able to walk. She never received medical attention for injuries as her parents actively attempted to cover up the injuries (telling her to have cold showers after physical abuse, to put ice on bruises, or to wear clothing that covered her injuries).

In spite of this, client persisted to study a short course at a local tertiary provider. One day, while she was in class, her father contacted her to let her know that he had arranged a marriage for her. She was not aware of who or where the suitor was. Her father had been talking about her marriage and been trying to arrange it since she was 14 years old. Her older sibling's marriages were arranged in the same manner.

Client reached out to one of the school staff members who contacted Shakti on her behalf. This started the process of her being picked up and being brought to the safehouse. However, she was very anxious as her father is a very influential and a highly regarded figure in their religious and ethnic community. She was concerned because she knew that her father “is able to do things” and is well connected. After leaving home, her father continued to go to her school more than a few times, asking school staff members and other students of client's whereabouts. She also received so many emails from her father (approximately 100 in a month). Her anxiety was exacerbated by the fact that she had seen

school counsellors when she was younger but who did not take the abuse she was experiencing at home seriously. It took her a lot of courage to talk about

them with somebody outside of home but was very upset that no one listened to her. As she grew older, she was not sure if she would receive the help she needed with regards to intervening in the marriage her father had arranged.

**Services provided:** Due to the wide influence of client's father in their community in Auckland and his constant attempts to contact her despite police intervention, client moved to a different city. She received a temporary Protection Order that afforded her a certain sense of safety while going through those initial weeks when she was most at risk. Client also completed sessions of counselling, medical assistance as well as support to start getting student allowance from WINZ. Shakti also collaborated with her school so that client could start doing remote or online learning instead of having to attend classes in person.

**Ongoing concerns:** While client is now resettling and re-establishing normality for her in the community, she knows that she will always be anxious of where she is and who she engages with. She can't live in certain cities where her family has many connections and where her father regularly visits as part of his role in the religious community. She feels that she will always need to look over her shoulder and be extra vigilant at all times. She knows that her decision to leave and her defiance of her family's wishes are perceived unforgivable and which has brought shame to the name of a very prominent family in their community. Her safety is a day to day concern for her which, unfortunately, is not seen in the same way by many in the mainstream society.





## ***Vulnerable Unborn***

One of the significant ways that people learn about Shakti's services is through word-of-mouth. A Middle Eastern client found a way to contact Shakti through her sister-in-law (SIL) who was also a victim of abuse, left her husband, and sought support from Shakti. So this client and her SIL (an ex-client) married two brothers. Both these brothers were abusive and they all lived together in one house at one point. The sister-in-law (SIL) was a Shakti client a few years ago and now independently living on her own with her children. She started talking to the client in secret because she knew what she was going through in that house. The client had been regularly beaten and maltreated throughout her marriage with incidents of hair pulling, slapping, and pushing. She was treated like a slave with no freedom, no voice, and no choice in any matters relating to the household, the children, or her life. She was not allowed to work, learn English, or talk to anyone outside the house. Her food was even portioned and would be yelled at if she asks for more. When she finally came to Shakti safehouse, she was 31 years old but looked more like in her 50's. She was pregnant with 2 young children. She was very scared of possible repercussions of leaving her husband and his family. It took a lot of reassurance that her location will remain confidential and no one will inform her husband, not even the police.

**Intervention and services:** After moving to the safehouse, an initial case plan was discussed to get the legal support to apply for legal orders. She had a joint account with her partner and Shakti assisted her to open a separate individual account. Discussions about counselling services, food assistance, support during pregnancy, addressing kindergarten needs for the children were also held as well as applications for WINZ benefit and housing. She was eventually granted a Temporary Protection Order and Interim Parenting Order. The perpetrator has only defended the Parenting Order which is a possible a long-term issue between parties. Shakti also assisted her to get accommodation supplement and sole parent benefit from WINZ as well as Family Tax Credit under IRD along with the application for social housing. Kids were also enrolled in the nearby pre-school.

**Challenges:** Shakti collaborated with different agencies on various occasions to provide tailored support to the client. Initially, when she came to the safehouse, she was unaware of who her midwife was because all communications and arrangements were done by her husband. Shakti utilised their contact at the

DHB to get this sorted and to ensure that she completed all requirements for hospital appointments. Because of her situation of being unemployed, limited English communication skills, pregnant, and with 2 young children; it was very challenging to talk about moving out in time for birth or finding a place in the community. Even if she finds a suitable place and moves out of the safehouse, who will look after her children when she has to go to the hospital to give birth or how will she manage on her own afterwards when she goes home with a baby. Her SIL was supportive and willing to look after the children but only on limited time because she has young children herself and she was working at a local bakery. Add to these concerns was the fact that the client was already expected to stay longer in the hospital due to some complications to her pregnancy. Shakti liaised with OT, Plunket, and another children welfare agencies to talk about options for the children during and after birth but no one was able to offer support or an alternative. In the end, client had to stay longer in the safehouse and looking for housing options continued after she gave birth. During her time in the hospital, Shakti staff made a roster where at least 1 staff member was based in the safehouse during the day and ensured the children have food and their needs provided. And then for evening time, three staff members (1 single and 2 mothers with older children) rostered themselves to sleep in the safehouse to do the evening routines for the children, especially dinner and bath, and ensured that they were okay the whole night. The client and her newborn stayed in the hospital for 1 week so it was a week where staff were on nanny duties for the 2 toddlers while at the same time visiting the client and her baby to provide reassurance and support during the day.



**Outcome:** With continuous follow-ups with KO (HNZ), client was given a social housing property. Shakti supported in shifting and resettling her back into the community. Her kids were transferred to a different pre-school. Shakti helped her to set up the power and internet and settle well in her new home. Some donations were made for the furniture and other basic items were ordered through MSD. Initially, the client was worried for herself as well as her children's future but after she was made aware of all the support she could get in the community, she was quite relieved. She has now settled fully taking responsibility for her children. She has great support from her sister-in-law who persisted and encouraged her to leave the abusive environment they both suffered from for a long time. She will be dealing with continuing legal and court processes which may last for years especially if perpetrator will continue to use it to make life difficult for her. For now, the

client is content that she is out of the abusive relationship and can plan a better life for herself and her children.

# Shakti Youth Unit



The initiative of Shakti Youth was established in 2010 which grew organically over the years. Shakti Community Council Inc. was seeing a growing number of forced/underage marriage, honour-based violence and inter-generational bullying cases throughout New Zealand. The young Asian, African and Middle-Eastern youth were eager to create a service that was solely run by ethnic youth for ethnic youth.

Shakti Youth aims to work towards building a future without violence and discrimination. We deliver intervention and prevention-based projects to challenge gender inequality in migrant and refugee communities and racism in the wider community.







# S.Y.N.C - Shakti Youth Network for Change

We are continuing with our Shakti Network for Change (SYNC) programmes in high schools nationally, this is a long-term programme aimed at empowering youth of migrant and refugee backgrounds to be leaders in social change. It has been successful in sustaining engagement with high school students, supporting youth in their schools with student-led projects.



## Weaam's Story

*After being involved with Shakti in high-school I have made so many meaningful connections and friends as well as learnt heaps in fact sometimes use the activities you had done with us with community groups and events which I facilitate . I am currently studying global studies at Auckland University and this decision was definitely influenced partly by Shakti and what I had learned through them as it is a degree all about the world and communication, in particular inter faith and inter cultural dialogue. After high-school I have helped here and there with some Shakti projects and community events and taken part in online projects or advocacy, especially ones through action station.*



# BLACK LIVES MATTER



In the midst of a global pandemic and a global revolution, discussions with young people started to shift, our SYNC workshops in schools started to have more in-depth discussions of the history of slavery, white privilege, institutionalised racism and our world views. Young people are intrigued to learn more about the histories of the world and New Zealand and have been inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and the eagerness to take action and create change. Shakti Youth Ambassadors organised school fundraisers for Black Lives Matter organisations, wrote speeches and poems, volunteered and organised marches and sign making sessions. In Wellington the Shakti Youth team volunteered with the Mental Health Space and in Christchurch the Shakti Youth Team organised sign making sessions and helped organised the March. It was remarkable to witness young people take the lead in organising the movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Shakti Youth community was standing with them. During our Let's Chat event in Christchurch, a common issue brought up was that young people spoke about learning to live in an injustice and unequal life because their voices were never being heard and racism became a systematic pattern of their daily lives.

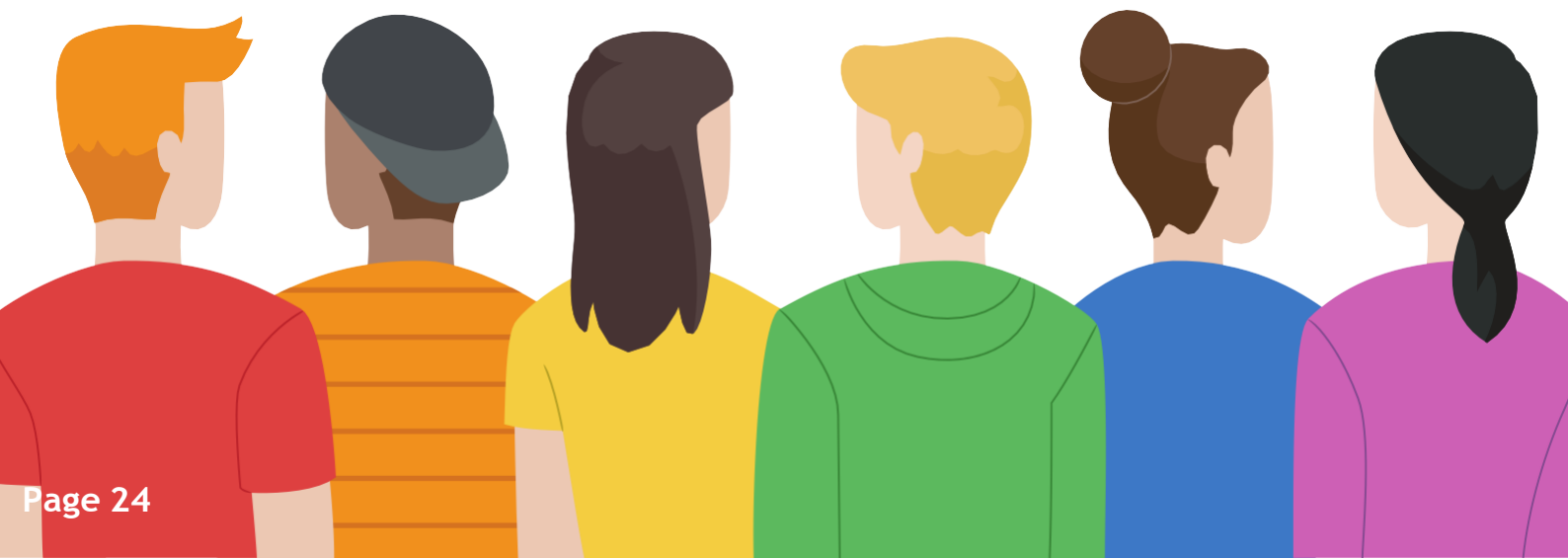
# Workshops in Auckland

In Auckland, we have led the workshops with Mt. Roskill Grammar, Papatoetoe High School, Lynfield College, Auckland Girls Grammar, and Avondale College.

The workshops at Mt Roskill Grammar, Papatoetoe High School, Lynfield College and Auckland Girls Grammar have been a result of established relationships with each school through SYNC or through case work (often both). The Let's Deal With It workshops were held with the school's existing SYNC groups as pilot workshops. Each school has a group of about 10-15 students who attended the workshops. The workshops would look at questions about social cohesion using Ara Taiohi's Mosaic Cards. The students who attended these workshops were able to have meaningful conversations about how they view social cohesion and their vision for Aotearoa's future.

Avondale College's Lets Deal With It workshops have been slightly different in format to the other Auckland high schools. Avondale College does not have an established SYNC group, due to the school's policies on establishing new groups. However, we have been able to interact with students at the school through their yearly leadership training day. We have managed to run two Let's Deal With It workshops at Avondale College – one in 2020 and one in 2021. These workshops have lasted for about 2-3 hours each, which is a lot longer than the workshops we have run at other high schools. The longer the workshops have allowed time for the questions such as “What does an ideal Aotearoa look like?” it provided the opportunity to go in depth and encouraged them to come back with further questions later in the workshop.

The Avondale College workshops have more students from diverse backgrounds. Approximately 30 students attend these workshops, which is a larger number compared to other high school workshops. The workshops are facilitated slightly differently including some team building exercises due to higher number of participants and extended time.





# Workshops In Christchurch



Christchurch we have been running workshops since term one in Hagley college, Linwood College and Christchurch Girls High School. We have also reached out to few schools who have expressed interest in workshops like Riccarton High School, Cashmere High School, Papanui High School and Burnside High School.

The outcomes from the workshops are generally successful with an average of 15 students attending across schools. Most students are aged from 13 - 15 years old. After each workshop, students were invited to give their feedback and aside from the aforementioned feedback students have expressed that they have learned something valuable and they felt comfortable participating the workshops within the school community.

Students have also said that the workshops have helped them to explore and understand their culture and identity and have helped them understand and develop their skills and knowledge.

# Workshops in Dunedin

Twenty-four of our Let's Deal With It workshops were delivered in Dunedin in different capacities. The aim of these workshops was to encourage social cohesion in our local communities in light of the March 15th terror attack. We wanted to create a safe space for our young people to express the opinions and go through a process of self-reflection in consideration their surrounding community members. Are they being mindful of others when forming or expressing opinions, for example? Some of our workshops were conducted with friend groups where the participants talked about their feelings and the oppression that they faced from some of their group members. We have also korero about situations when we go over boundaries unknowingly. One of the questions in our workshop was 'What is the line between funny and offensive?' This question opened up some deep conversation between the friend groups. However, after this question, boundaries were set between this friend group.

Other workshops were held in collaboration with Dunedin- based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like OCASA: Otepoti Collective Against Sexual Abuse were keen to collaborate with Shakti after our youth coordinator promoted the workshop at an Ethnic Women's Conference in Dunedin. During the sexual abuse awareness week, we delivered three workshops in collaboration with OCASA, the Refugee Club, and the Muslim Students Association. One of the questions asked was: 'What does an ideal Aotearoa look like?' One of the participants answered, "where discrimination is called out, individual discriminations are held accountable and also allow to learn from their mistakes and grow without receiving hate." Another student said, "where minority groups and disadvantaged groups are prioritised."



A couple of the workshops were delivered to the steering group which helped our youth advocate to deliver these workshops to the wider Dunedin community. These workshops were conducted over zoom. Our steering group members ranged from different backgrounds, including refugees, Pacifica, Pakeha, and Arabs. During these workshops, a couple of the steering group members mentioned that these workshops have allowed them to think deeper and revisit their opinions, even though some of these members were quite vocal and prominent activists in the community.

# Movie Nights In Christchurch

From hosting our youth movie night in Christchurch, we found that young people are continuing to search for a sense of belonging regardless of whether they are newly arrived migrants or born in New Zealand.

For the youth movie night in Christchurch, we organized a screening of the movie "The Hate You Give" along with activities based on privileges based on feelings and scenarios. This movie night collaborated with Red Cross youth, and participants were asked, "How do you feel? How do people treat you? Do you feel safe?" Approximately 20 young people attended the movie night. The participants have requested for more movie nights and a safe space to have these conversations as they wanted to learn more about racism and discrimination and how to identify it as they navigate and build a bond with their new home in this country. They also expressed interest in stepping up and taking up the cause in their areas.





## Movie Night In Wellington



The proceeds from ticket and raffle sales were used to raise funds for Refugee Appeal Month. The NZ movie "Shopping" (2013) was screened at Newtown Community Centre.

Guests were grateful of the hard-hitting topics covered in the movie and highlighted the necessity to have these difficult conversations in the community to tackle the injustices facing by the youth in Aotearoa. Below were some of the questions and responses explored during the movie night:

- ♦ What are your general thoughts about the film and its themes? The intersections of class, race, cultural identities and religions shape people's experiences of family violence.
- ♦ What do you think of the way the cyclical nature of violence was explored in the movie? In the film, we saw Willie's threshold when it comes to dealing with family violence when his father hit his younger brother who became direct target to violence.
- ♦ How do you think this knowledge of differing "breaking points" exists in our discussions about family violence in our own communities?

The conversations highlighted the tendency to judge victims' choices in any given situation. It was further highlighted that informal methods of intervention may be more common in more collectivist communities; formal methods of intervention rely on "trust" of state authorities, e.g. social workers, police officers, which may not be realistic for those who are on the margins.



# Let Me Speak Panel Discussion - Wellington

In Wellington the team organised the “Let Me Speak” panel discussion of coming out stories for rainbow ethnic communities, partnering with Inside Out during Wellington Pride Week. Four ethnic panellists were invited to the event and shared their experiences and opinions on the intersectionality between their ethnic and LGBTQIA+ identity. The event received very positive responses and several requests were made to turn this into an annual event. The attendees recognised that there is a lack of knowledge and information about the rainbow ethnic community, both within and outside these groups. The event created a platform for those voices to be heard and for representation to be visible to the youth seeking it. It has also highlighted the culturally specific difficulties that ethnic LGBT+ individuals need to face in their lives. By addressing these issues and validating their experiences, it could be helpful for future advocacy work or even policymaking endeavours.



# Implementation of community networking



Despite the uncertain COVID-19 lockdown period in 2020 and 2021, Shakti Youth Unit has been able to implement community connection with young people from Asian, African and Middle Eastern background. These young people are from 14-24 years old. Most of these young people are pursuing education in high school and university. These connections are vital for the implementation of the "Let's Deal With It" documentary production as ideally we want our ambassadors to be mobilized from these connections.

Shakti Youth Wellington has successfully engaged with Wellington East Girls College, Naenae College, Sacred Heart College and Hutt Valley High School. Wellington Youth team have also been able to communicate with Victoria University.

Shakti Youth Christchurch has been reaching out to new schools on a monthly basis, targeting all schools with diverse ethnicities. Hagley College, Linwood College, Christchurch Girls High School, Cashmere High School, Papanui High School, and Burnside High School have been instrumental for the implementation of "Let's Deal With It" workshops.

Shakti Youth Auckland has been the initial point of contact for all the other regions to cater for material and resource needs. Alongside running the administration of the youth unit, they have restored the past relationships with schools like Papatoetoe High School, Auckland Girls Grammar, Mount Roskill Grammar, and Lynnfield College that was cut-off due to the first lockdown.

Shakti Youth Dunedin has been a challenge to set up due to the Pakeha majority demographic however the challenge was addressed in July 2020 followed by the setting up of Shakti Youth affiliation with Otago University Student Association and by initial contact with Logan Park High School.

# FUTURE EVENTS



We were planning another movie night in Wellington that focuses on discrimination and to invite three panellists to this event. This was expected to be another fundraiser event. Because of the COVID-19 situation, it has been postponed. We are expecting to carry out the plan when we move to alert level 1. If the restriction is longer than we expected, then maybe we will organise the movie night as an online event later on in the year or at the beginning of 2022.

Currently, we are in the midst of producing a documentary that highlights the issues that our young people face. This documentary will consist of twelve episodes followed by a screening event. This documentary will be used as a resource for the workshops we do with our high schools and universities. With continuing support from stakeholders, we will sustain these gains and continue building connections between and amongst young people from Middle Eastern, Asian and African backgrounds.

# SHAKTI COUNSELLING SERVICES

## OVERVIEW

The year 2020-2021 has been a challenging one as the country hopped, skipped and jumped through various levels within the 4-tiered Alert Level system introduced from March 21, 2020 by the government to counter COVID. Auckland was the most impacted with the Delta variant of COVID spreading far and wide. These developments also impacted on Shakti's service delivery to vulnerable women and children in the region.

Shakti Counselling and Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Programme Facilitation Services was originally poised for further development in 2021. However, given the environment where individual safety and protection from COVID became paramount, new projects had to be shelved until a time the country, especially Auckland, would be in the Green Light of the new COVID-related traffic light system. This is because face to face interaction would be necessary for the new projects planned.

Despite the restrictions imposed by COVID on the work, Shakti's Counsellors and Safety Programme Facilitators continued to deliver what could be delivered, predominantly using online, audio and visual media to deliver the services.

A number of constraints were also noted within the client groups as not every one had the privacy they had to receive the services they were offered and/or did not have the required internet connectivity to be able to respond effectively to therapy and programme delivery. The team were also constantly worried about the harm and welfare status of women at high risk. They continued to monitor their well-being through phone, texts and WhatsApp.





The Counselling Services National Coordinator who is employed full-time oversaw the Programme Delivery while the Counselling Service Administrator monitored the therapy side of service delivery. The team are happy to report that none of the clients serviced during the period reported further risk or bodily harm and the team believe that has been facilitated through the prompt actions and responses of the Counsellors and MOJ Programme Facilitators who worked with the Shakti social workers to move those whose risks had heightened, to refuge accommodation.

The services continued to use the COVID Risk Assessment Policy of Shakti whenever face to face sessions had to be engaged in. During the reporting period, none of Shakti's staff or clients contracted COVID. However, the team had to work on softening the pain and anguish of those whose loved ones back in their home countries had contracted COVID.

## MOJ Protected Persons Safety Programme

For the Annual Reporting period April 2020 – March 2021, we received 255 referrals in total in Auckland, Wellington, Tauranga and Christchurch.

Under the MOJ Safety Programme, Shakti is contracted for two types of services:

- ♦ Strengthening Safety Services which is for those victims who are awaiting their Protection Orders or those whose offenders have criminal charges laid against them; and
- ♦ Supporting Safety Sessions which are offered to those who have Protection Orders. The services delivered are based on an in-house psycho-educational programme for women victims and children affected by abuse and violence. Supporting Safety Sessions were delivered by only those with counselling and psychology study background.

During the reporting period, Shakti had 19 Facilitators to deliver this programme in the four regions Shakti was contracted in.



### ***MOJ Review/Audit:***

In the months of July and December 2020, we had MOJ review visits in Auckland by our MOJ Contract Managers. Another monitoring/review visit was done in February 2021 this year. Tauranga and Christchurch MOJ programme service delivery were also reviewed in November 2020.

These visits focused on Shakti's compliance of the programme delivery standards, apprising open referrals and agency updates. The frequency of these audits and monitoring visits emphasize the depth of work required by Shakti Facilitators and Administrators. We also outlined our challenges at these meetings: particularly with the ongoing issues with staff retention and turnover – impacted by high salary offers for registered counsellors in other sectors and inability to offer enough permanent hours for MOJ contract (being fee-based arrangement); unavailability of the client within specified time periods or clients asking us to keep the file open and wanting to do the programme at later dates; and difficulties in delivering children's programmes as most clients want to engage during school holidays. Additionally, challenges associated with COVID-19 and session delivery were also addressed in the meetings. The challenges in client engagement and session delivery during COVID times has been a major point of discussions in the meetings.

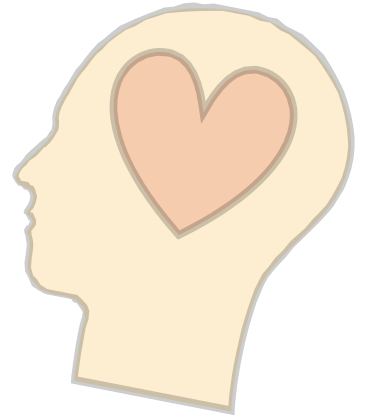
Shakti appreciates such visits as they provide ongoing support and guidance towards effective programme delivery. We are happy to report that no adverse findings of significance were reported by MOJ. We would like to thank the Ministry of Justice for continuing to have confidence in our programme and service delivery.





# Shakti Counselling Services

Shakti Counselling Services provides one to one counselling for survivors and their family members either free of charge or through Work & Income subsidy. For the reporting April 2020 to March 2021 we received around 176 counselling referrals. Because of various Alert Levels especially in Auckland many had to be counselled non-face to face.



During the reporting period, we had 3 fully registered counsellors on board. One of our students on placement and part-time staff got provisional registration. Besides one existing student on placement in Auckland, we took two more students on placement one of whom has completed her placement.

Since one of our senior counsellors is registered with ACC for Sensitive Claims, we were able to refer clients reporting sexual abuse to her for therapy.



## *Case Studies*

A **34-year-old mother** of African origin and a mother of two children (aged 2 and 7 years) came to New Zealand from Africa to join her husband here. She expected that he would help her to settle in and they would become a family. However, he often engaged in binge drinking with his brother who lived with them. When he came home drunk, he would beat her up. He would not give her money for household goods and constantly belittle her. Eventually, he began a new relationship with another woman after which his abusive behaviour escalated with the client. One night, he kicked her out of the house. She did not have anywhere to go or be able to call for help, but her neighbour found her and called the police. The client was vulnerable and fragile physically, mentally and emotionally when she came to Shakti. She did not have any relatives or friends and or knowledge of New Zealand society. She was not allowed to eat meat as her perpetrator said that meat should be bought and cooked only for him and his brother. She was underweight and her attitude was submissive with no opinions offered. It was apparent this was as a result of how he had treated her and which reflected in her lack of confidence, low self-esteem and low mood. She lacked the ability to socially engage because of being kept in isolation, did not drive and even found it difficult to manage a cell-phone. Her daughter kept her phone so that she could respond to incoming calls. Before starting her Safety programme, she had 10 sessions of counselling, when she was in Shakti's safe house. The counselling sessions were helpful in preparing her to move out, increase engagement with others, build back her confidence and self-esteem, etc.

When we started delivery of the programme, she showed enthusiasm about the programme's contents. She asked questions on New Zealand laws on domestic violence and information on policing. She also expressed empathy for the women victims while watching "Women's stories" on the MOJ DVD, which showed that she had begun expressing her emotions, which until then were suppressed. During the session delivery period, COVID lockdown brought about delays and changes in scheduling. Extended sessions were effectively used for learning parenting skills and enabled her an opportunity for experiencing and learning on what entails neglectful parenting and consequences therein which helped her manage her truant daughter better. She completed the programme and believes she now has sufficient knowledge to keep herself and her children safe.



A **12-year-old Vietnamese boy** was referred for the Programme. He had experienced physical abuse and severe disciplining from his father. He had to often intervene to protect his mother from his father's abuse and violence as well as from his paternal grandparents. He was also reprimanded by his paternal grandparents for taking his mother's side and therefore disrespecting his father's family. He faced pressure to perform and excel academically, even as he had to put up with witnessing arguments between his parents frequently. He said he would go very quiet and hide in his room whenever his father became angry and was always fearful of his father's reaction if he would say something back.

He also communicated to the child lawyer that he did not want to see his father again. The father has had multiple PSO's issued against him. When we started the programme, he was very quiet. An ice breaker was therefore introduced wherein he taught the facilitator how to play the game on the toy he carried with him. This became a good confidence booster for him to show off his own talent and skills and with the positive reaffirmation he got through this process, he began to feel like an equal participant in the programme rather than the facilitator being perceived as in a position of authority. It was hard for him to describe past incidents in much detail, but upon processing, he insisted on being asked more detailed and or specific questions so that he found it easier to answer. The activities helped to identify existing and/or new people post-separation from father and what part each person would play. Based on his own self-reflection on how quiet he was and how hard it was for him to open up, different individuals listed in both those activities were tasked with different roles in relation to him in terms of personal life events, finding strength and motivation as well as in finding fun and laughter.

# Training, Outreach and Networking Activities

Two sessions of training and capacity building sessions for MOJ Facilitators took place during the period. Monitoring took place on a fortnightly basis and Supervision & Debrief took place once a month led by the Lead Counsellor and MOJ Programme Facilitator.



## Challenges

- Due to Covid-19, we faced limitations in programme delivery, especially during specific periods throughout the reporting period.
- Every new referral was assessed mainly for risk and safety and action plan was put in place for them. Therapeutic endeavours were also exercised by our Counsellors-Facilitators to address Covid-19 related anxiety for themselves and their loved ones, in New Zealand and overseas. One of the issues that became important especially after the breakout of Covid-19 was keeping clients and their children safe, in relation to parenting arrangements.
- Many clients' respondents frequently breached the Protection Order (PO) which put the clients in extreme high risk, made them anxious, depressed and sometimes even prone to suicidal thoughts. Some thought that reconciliation was better than facing the difficulties of coming out of the abusive relationship. In such a situation, our staff put out a notice of concern with the police and MOJ. Furthermore, the client's lawyer was also informed and the Notice of concern was also sent to Oranga Tamaraki (OT) if the client had children.



- ♦ In situations where the clients agreed to engage online, our facilitators tried to ensure that the clients are alone so the confidentiality can be maintained. Furthermore, the facilitators tried to encourage the clients to wear headphones, and turn the video camera on. The video camera gives the facilitators some idea on how the clients are engaging, and allowed the facilitator to gauge if they are alone, or if it is safe for them to engage in sessions.
- ♦ With those who engaged face to face or online at Alert level 1 & 2, we had to tailor the programme as per individual needs to emphasise safety first. All COVID policy related protocols developed by Shakti in line with Ministry of Health requirements were implemented during delivery of the service.

## In Conclusion:

Shakti and its members have been going through exceptionally difficult times in 2021, because of COVID and other factors. Without the passion, dedication and commitment of our staff including Administrators, Counsellors and Programme Facilitators, we would have been unable to fulfil our tasks aimed at promoting the safety and well-being of those we service. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the retention and growth of Shakti's counselling and safety programme services.





# Shakti Education Training & Advisory Company Ltd (SETAC)

SETAC is a limited liability company with 100% shareholding by Shakti Community Council Inc. After operating as a part of Shakti and owned by Shakti for several years, the Governance has decided to restructure SETAC Ltd into a Trust which will allow more autonomy for SETAC and enable the entity to access wide-ranging funding including from private trusts focused on environmental issues. The renamed and restructured organisation is called, Shakti Education Training & Advisory Trust (SETAT).

Covid and the restrictions it came with threw considerable challenges to the organisation that is reliant on face to face training and workshop delivery. This gave SETAC an opportunity to look at online training options which enabled the organisation to widen the geographical base of its programme delivery. An opportunity to review and restructure training for staff/volunteers as well as community-based training for clients also came up and we invested time in doing some work in this regard.



# 2020 & 2021 Highlights

## Training programmes

Women's Empowerment Programmes aim to provide a safe learning environment for women disadvantaged through their experience of domestic violence. It adopts a holistic approach to training to promote the physical and emotional well-being of such women. This programme also facilitates the development of the women's community engagement and employment skills to increase their capability to become self-reliant and contribute actively to New Zealand economy.



## Retail & Customer Services and Life Skills Training at Sustinnoworx shop:

SETAC conducted a Retail & Customer Services and Life Skills Training for Shakti clients from September 2020 to April 2021 at the Sustinnoworx shop in Henderson. The training provided participants a valuable avenue to upskill in a supportive and conducive learning environment in order to be more employable.

The retail training and practice and on-the-job experience component (180 hours) of the training took place at Sustinnoworx under the close supervision of the shop manager and business development manager who are based at the shop. In the retail training component participants learn skills relating to customer services and interaction, knowledge about products, handling EFTPOS and cash sales, shop management and NZ work culture.

Clients received a further 28 hours of training in basic sewing skills and pattern development and 45 hours of training in the following life skills:

- ♦ Employment skills: CV writing and preparation
- ♦ Health and Wellbeing: Domestic Violence Awareness
- ♦ Community Skills: Sustainable living, Finance and Budgeting, Road Safety & Learner Licence and English for everyday communication.

The training also included additional sessions by guest speakers on the following topics:

- ♦ Mental health and COVID 19: SETAC organised a workshop with Debbie Hager, Senior Tutor, Public Health, Auckland University to talk to the SETAC students about anxiety and mental health.
- ♦ Inspiring stories: Lema Shamamba, Ranui Community Garden coordinator, attended one our training to share her inspiring stories. She shared her experience as a refugee from Republic Democratic of Congo and how as non-English speaker she found her way to financial independency and becoming a leader in her community.



*Some of the participants of these programmes found employment towards the latter part of the programme and on completion of the training. However, a few participants could not complete the programme; some left because they had found jobs, some started voluntary work, and some were unable to continue due to mental health and domestic violence issues.*

*We believe our training and references provided contributed to them gaining employment.*

## Women's Empowerment Programme (8-week)

The course duration is for 8 weeks, two days a week covering 64 hours of classroom coaching sessions. At the end of each session, they receive a certificate of completion. These courses are planned to be held alternatively at different Shakti offices in Manukau, Onehunga and West Auckland.

### *Programme Structure:*

The following components of life skills training are covered:

Community Skills: English for Everyday Communication, Sustainable Living, Road Safety and Learner Licensing, Positive Parenting and Managing Finances including a talk on the Whanau project and a talk by a representative from WINZ.

- ♦ *Health and Wellbeing:* Emotional and Mental Wellbeing, Nutrition and Diet, Domestic Violence Awareness and Art Therapy.
- ♦ *Employment Skills:* CV Writing and Interview Skills, presentation from Dress for Success staff on professional attire for a job interview and work followed by a visit to their store for a practical experience.

The Manuka office held the first Women's Empowerment 8-week Programme. Most of the participants (Shakti Clients) completed the programme. A few found fulltime jobs and were unable to attend the course, while one opted to wait for the next course in Onehunga. The participants who completed the course, either found employment, or registered at MIT to do a course, or are receiving training and working as a volunteer at the Sustinnoworx shop.

We are pleased with the outcome of the programme in terms of the progress made by the participants and skills they have learnt. We received very positive feedback and they expressed the desire for more programmes of similar nature. They also requested for regular get-togethers for the group including a talk or workshop at these meetings. There was good fellowship amongst the participants who enjoyed each other's company.





### ***Retail and Customer Service Training for participants attending the 8-week Women's Empowerment Programme***

Some participants from the Manukau and Onehunga programme are receiving retail and customer service training at our Sustinnoworx shop under the guidance of the shop manager. More participants from the Onehunga programme will join the retail training at Sustinnoworx after completing the Life Skills programme.

### ***Referrals from the Department of Corrections - Sustinnoworx***

The programme is a partnership with the Department of Corrections to provide an opportunity for women on probation to do community service hours as required by the court sentencing at the Sustinnoworx Shop in Henderson.

In August 2020, Sustinnoworx was registered and eligible to welcome women on probation in our shops. Unfortunately, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, it was harder for women from their department to join us for different reasons, one being transport. In March 2021, the partnership finally became active, and the first women on probation registered and joined the programme.

Those women on probation who are sent to work at the shop are selected in consultation with the shop manager and interviewed by her before the commencement of work. Anyone with violent convictions is not accepted. Orientation is organised for each person individually to familiarise themselves with the shop, health and safety requirements and the scope of work. The shop manager assigns a variety of jobs, such as sorting out donations received by the shop, packing and organising shelves, cleaning and vacuuming the shop.

The first person on probation signed up on 10th March 2021 and started work on 21st March 2021. So far, five women have signed up. The required community service hours vary from 40 hours to 200 hours. Thus far, one person on probation has completed her required service hours; three are currently working at the shop, with one having mental health issues that require constant supervision by the shop manager. One person on probation was due to start workweek beginning 16th August 2021 but was delayed due to the level four lockdown in Auckland.

We have received positive and encouraging feedback from the Department of Corrections on the performance of the placements. They are also thankful and appreciative of the opportunity for placement for the women on probation.

### ***Staff/volunteer training***

Shakti staff and volunteer training continued as needed. Every new member had to go through the training. Unfortunately, due to lockdown and various alert levels, especially in Auckland, most of the training was conducted online



# From The Funding Desk

The year that has gone by has been a remarkable one for Shakti. We are happy to report that despite the organisation's challenges during the reporting period, the commitment of funders has remained strong and supportive.

After several years of very marginal increase, MSD has improved its funding contribution to Shakti's Refuge and Crisis services alongside all other Refuges in New Zealand. This is greatly appreciated, and we would like to thank the Ministry for the same.

Throughout this funding period, COVID-19 has had significant effects on the organisation and the management of Shakti's crisis response and refuge services for survivors of domestic violence. The Ministry of Social Development also provided us with additional support throughout this time, with additional funding given to assist with any needs related to COVID-19. This has provided our Refuge Coordinators with the ability to provide the appropriate resources to our clients and ensure that they have access to grocery deliveries, necessary appointments, and any further assistance as required.

Support through government funding and private funders, trusts, and philanthropic groups has been paramount to Shakti in providing continued support for our clients and their children. While government funding makes up around one-third of our national operational costs across Shakti's five refuges and ten drop-in service centres, our additional sources of funding from other groups and private trusts enable us to continue servicing vulnerable victims of family violence. Shakti also received a bequest, for which we are beyond grateful to the Mavis Bertha Elston family.

We extend a big THANK YOU to all of our funders, well-wishers, and donors who have stood by us and supported the work that we do. Our funders for the period of 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 include the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki; Ministry of Business Innovation and

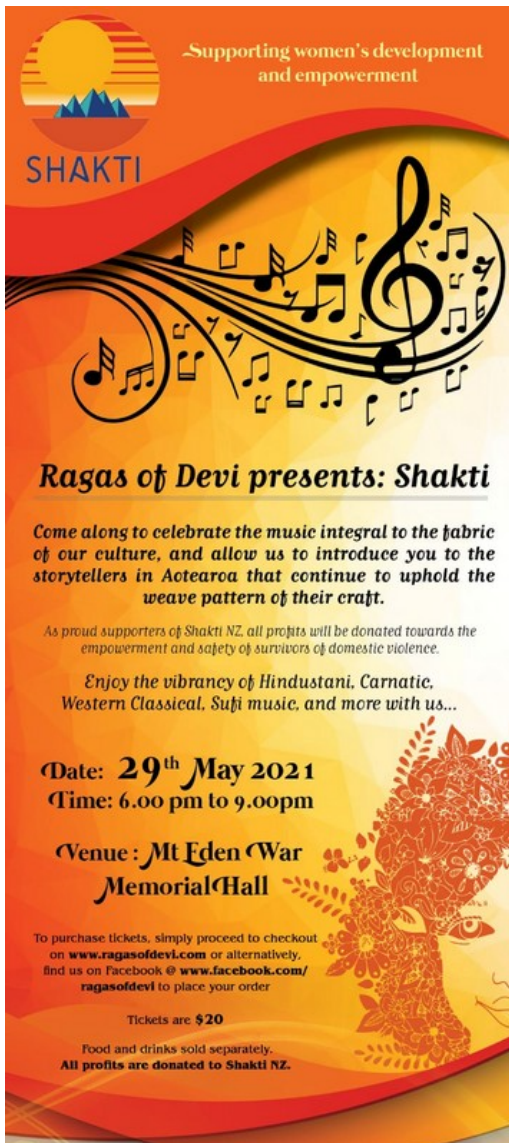




THANK  
YOU

Employment (Immigration); Ministry of Justice; Department of Internal Affairs; Work and Income; Ministry of Women; Ministry of Youth Development; COGS; Lottery Grants Board; The Todd Foundation; Foundation North; Bay Trust; TECT; Wellington Community Trust; The Lion Foundation; Auckland City Council; Zonta Club; Rata Foundation; The Trusts Community Foundation; Dunedin City Council; Otago Community Trust; Catholic Caring Foundation; United Way NZ; Housing New Zealand; Patricia France Charitable Trust; The Lou and Iris Fisher Charitable Trust; Ara Taiohi; the Taylor Family; The Gift Trust Foundation; The Acorn Foundation; Tauranga City Council; Christchurch City Council; JR McKenzie Trust; Tauranga Energy Consumers Trust; Upper Hut City Council; Wellington City Council; Rose Charities; Nikau Foundation; Western Bay of Plenty; and several private donors.

# RAGAS OF DEVI



On Saturday May 29th Devi Sobhana bought together the Ragas of Devi event with a group of other classical Indian music artists. The event highlighted the hard work done by Shakti to ensure that women experiencing domestic violence or distress could once again live a life of dignity, free from fear and violence.

Ragas of Devi portrayed the four important emotional stages in every woman's life through music, art and dance. The emotions are carefree, love and affection, determination and struggles, and hope.

The event included a live band, dance performances and singers who covered Hindustani classical, Carnatic, Sufi (Persian form), Qawwali (Persian as well), Punjabi, Western Classical, Western pop and Bollywood. The event showcased forms of music/genres with the belief that all music unites and that we can all sing in different languages/forms from the same sheet. All songs were predominantly had women/empowerment at its central theme.



## ***About Devi and why she wanted to do this event***

Devi is an established professional singer with roots in Carnatic (south Indian form) music, who was cut off for several years from her passion when going through an incredibly difficult phase in her personal life.

Though she was raised in a very progressive family, she had to call Shakti for help at one point in her life and had to temporarily move to one of their safe houses with her son. It was during her short stay in that safe house when she realised two important things. First, there were often women in migrant communities who were in a far less fortunate situation than hers with no job or financial backup. She realised that there were many women in the community who just do not reach out for help when they are going through abuse in their personal lives.

Second, Devi had first handily witnessed was the impact of reassuring support of organisations like Shakti in the lives of migrant women enduring domestic violence and abuse. Even with the limited resources, the Shakti safe house has provided her with peace and a feeling of safety. She realised Shakti needed and deserved much more help than what they were receiving.

The Ragas of Devi was a way for Devi to do something meaningful to pay tribute to Shakti. At the same time the event was a way to inspire other women to never stop chasing their dreams and for them to know that they are not alone. The event and Devi have been an inspiration to many women.



